

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----- 069686

R 130454Z JAN 76
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2676
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NY

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 BAGHDAD 0028

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS
TATS: PFOR, IZ
SUBJ: MEETING WITH FONMIN UNDERSECRETARY HADITHI

1. SUMMARY: ON JAN 8 I CALLED ON FONMIN UNDERSECRETARY HADITHI, WHO IS RANKING BAATH PARTY MEMBER IN FONMIN. CALL WAS FORWARDED STEP IN USG-GOI RELATIONS SINCE USINT HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY LIMITED TO SEC GEN LEVEN IN FONMIN. HADITHI INDICATED THAT SOME CAHNGE IN US ATTITUDE TOWARDS PALESTINIANS WAS NECESSARY FOR IMPROVED USG-GOI RELATIONS, BUT GOI DID NOT EXPECT USG TO GIVE UP ITS SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL. HE ALSO SAID THAT "SOME ARAB STATES" KNEW THAT THEY WOULD HAVE TO RECOGNIZE EXISTENCE OF STATE OF ISRAEL, BUT RESTATED GOI POSITION THAT "SECULAR" STATES IN PALESTINE WAS PROPER SOLUTION. HE SAID THAT GOI DID NOT SUPPORT CURRENT SETTLEMENT EFFORTS BECAUSE THEY WOULD NOT LEAD TO "SATISFACTORY ARAB OBJECTIVES", BUT HE DID NOT SAY THAT IRAQ WOULD WORK ACTIVELY TO BLOCK THESE EFFORTS. SINCE MEETING PRODUCED USEFUL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS, I RECOMMEND THAT I BE INSTRUCTED TO CONVEY FURTHER DETAILS TO GOI ON USG POLICY IN REGRD TO PALESTINIANS AND ON USG POSITION IN CURRENT UNSC DEBATE. END SUMMARY.

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2. ON JAN. 8 I CALLED ON MOHAMMED SABRI AL-HADITHI, UNDER-

SECRETARY IN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. I HAD REQUESTED APPOINTMENT FOR COURTESY CALL TWO DAYS EARLIER. FACT I WAS GRANTED APPOINTMENT IS IN ITSELF ENCOURAGING FORWARD STEP IN USG-GOI RELATIONS SINCE USINT CONTACTS AT FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN LIMITED TO DIRECTOR GENERAL LEVEL. HADITHI HAS GEOGRAPHIC RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL NON-ARAB COUNTRIES IN FOMIN AND IS ALSO KNOWN (AND FEARED) AS RANKING BAAATH PARTY MEMBER IN MINISTRY. MEETING WAS GENERALLY FRIENDLY IN TONE.

3. I BEGAN MEETING WITH USUAL COURTESIES AND TOLD HADITHI THAT SECRETARY HAD PERSONALLY APPROVED MY ASSIGNMENT TO BAGHDAD AND I LOOKED FORWARD TO ESTABLISHING MORE EFFECTIVE AND HIGHER LEVEL DIALOGUE WITH GOI THAN WE HAD HAD IN RECENT YEARS. I SAID I THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT THAT WE HAVE CLEARER UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER'S POSITIONS THROUGH SUCH EXCHANGES. OTHERWISE BOTH GOVERNMENTS WOULD HAVE TO BASE THEIR POLICY DECISIONS ON ASSESSMENTS OF THE OTHER'S POSITIONS WHICH WERE GATHERED FROM JOURNALISTIC ACCOUNTS AND OTHER SECONDARY SOURCES. THIS COULD LEAD TO MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND MISCALCULATIONS. I POINTED OUT THAT WHEN NATIONS ARE HAVING DIFFERENCES, ACCURATE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THEM BECOMES EVEN MORE ESSENTIAL. I ADDED THAT THE FOREIGN POLICIES OF ALL NATIONS CONSTANTLY EVOLVE IN THE LIGHT OF NEW CIRCUMSTANCES AND IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE BOTH HAVE ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER'S POSITIONS AND ATTITUDES TO INCORPORATE INTO OUR RESPECTIVE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES. I ALSO MENTIONED THAT USG WAS PLEASED BY THE EXPANSION OF TRADE AND COMMERCIAL LINKS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND IRAQ AND SAID THAT WE WISHED TO SUPPORT THIS EXPANSION MORE EFFECTIVELY. WITH THIS END IN MIND WE HOPED TO ADD TWO OR THREE POSITIONS TO THE USINT STAFF.

4. HADITHI REPLIED THAT HE WAS HAPPY TO RECEIVE ME AND THAT HE AGREED WITH WHAT I HAD SAID ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCURATE COMMUNICATIONS. HE ALSO SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THAT AMERICAN BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY HAD MUCH TO OFFER THE UNDERDEVELOPED WORLD, INCLUDING IRAQ, AND THAT AMERICAN BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES WOULD HAVE FREE ACCESS TO ALL AGENCIES OF THE GOI AS REQUIRED TO MAKE THE NECESSARY COMMERCIAL CONTACTS.

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5. HADITHI THEN PROCEEDED WITH THE INEVITABLE LECTURE ON AMERICAN INEQUITIES TOWARDS THE PALESTINIANS AND GAVE PARTICULAR EMPHASIS TO THE US VETO OF THE UNSC RESOLUTION CONDEMNING THE ISRAELI AIR RAIDS ON LEBANON. I REPLIED THAT WE TOO STRONGLY DEPLORED ISRAELI AIR ATTACKS AND WE REGRETTED THAT WE HAD FELT COMPELLED TO VETO THE RESOLUTION. BUT WE COULD NOT TREAT THE AIR ATTACKS AS THOUGH THEY HAD TAKEN PLACE IN A VACUUM AND

WERE UNRELATED TO ANY PREVIOUS EVENTS. WE THOUGHT THE RESOLUTION SHOULD HAVE CONDEMNED ALL ACTS OF VIOLENCE IN THE AREA.

6. HADITHI ASKED WHAT OTHER ACTS I WAS REFERRING TO AND I SAID THAT WE HAD IN MIND THE ACTS OF THE PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS WHO HAD ALSO KILLED INNOCENT WOMEN AND CHILDREN. WE THOUGHT ALL SUCH ACTS WERE SENSELESS AND ONLY MADE A SOLUTION MORE DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE. HADITHI REPLIED THAT THE ISRAELIS HAD COMMITTED AGGRESSION ON THE PALESTINIANS AND THEREFORE THE GOI DID NOT CONSIDER ANYTHING THE PALESTINIANS DID IN RETURN AS AGGRESSION.

7. HADITHI THEN MADE POINT THAT GOI HAD EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH A NUMBER OF STATES THAT SUPPORT RIGHT OF ISRAEL TO EXIST AS AN INDEPENDENT NATION. HE MENTIONED FRANCE AND CERTAIN ARAB STATES THAT HAD ACCEPTED RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338. HE SAID THAT IRAQ DID NOT INSIST THAT USG DROP ITS SUPPORT FOR EXISTENCE OF STATE OF ISRAEL IN ORDER TO HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH GOI. WHAT DID BOTHER GOI WAS TOTALLY ONE-SIDED ATTITUDE OF USG ON PALESTINIAN QUESTION WHICH HAD NOW RESULTED IN ALMOST COMPLETE ISOLATION OF USG FROM ALL OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD ON PALESTINIAN ISSUES AS EVIDENCED BY RECENT UN VOTES. HE SAID THAT USG STILL SEEMED INCAPABLE OF ADMITTING THAT INJUSTICE HAD BEEN DONE TO PALESTINIANS OR THAT THEY HAD LEGITIMATE GRIEVANCES AGAINST STATE OF ISRAEL.

8. I REPLIED THAT THE USG WAS VERY MUCH AWARE OF THE NEED TO TAKE PALESTINIAN INTERESTS INTO ACCOUNT IN REACHING A SETTLEMENT OF THE ARAB-ISRAEL PROBLEM AND I SUGGESTED THAT HE TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT THE SAUNDERS STATEMENT, A TEXT OF WHICH I HAD TRANSMITTED PREVIOUSLY TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. I SAID THAT THIS STATEMENT SPELLED OUT OUR CONCERN FOR PALESTINIAN INTERESTS IN MORE DETAIL THAN HAD OUR EARLIER OFFICIAL STATEMENTS. HADITHI INDICATED HE WOULD LOOK CAREFULLY AT
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THE STATEMENT.

9. HADITHI THEN MENTIONED THAT THE OFFICIAL GOI POSITION ON ISRAEL IS THAT JEWS AND ARABS SHOULD LINK TOGETHER PEACEFULLY IN A SINGLE SECULAR STATE BUT HE ALSO SAID THAT "OTHER ARAB STATES" KNEW IN THEIR HEART OF HEARTS THAT THEY WOULD SOMEDAY HAVE TO ACCEPT THE EXISTENCE OF A STATE OF ISRAEL.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 130454Z JAN 76
FM USINT BAGHDAD
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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
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AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NY

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 BAGHDAD 0028

EXDIS

HE SAID THAT IRAQ DIFFERED FROM THESE STATES ON THIS ISSUE
BECAUSE IRAQ DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE CURRENT DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS
TOWARDS PEACE IN THE AREA WOULD LEAD TO "SATISFACTORY ARAB
OBJECTIVES." COMMENT: ALTHOUGH HADITHI DID NOT SAY SO
EXPLICITLY, IMPLICATION OF HIS REMARKS WAS THAT IRAQ WOULD NOT
NECESSARILY OPPOSE EFFORTS OF OTHER ARAB STATES TO REACH
SETTLEMENT THAT INCLUDED SOME RECOGNITION OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL.
IN FACT,GOI HAS REFRAINED FROM CRITICIZING SADAT
OR THE GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT FOR SINAI II AGREEMENT. END COMMENT.

10. I ENDED UP CONVERSATION BY REPEATING EARLIER STATEMENT
THAT FOREIGN POLICIES OF ALL STATES ARE IN A CONSTANT STATE OF
EVOLUTION IN THE LIGHT OF NEW CIRCUMSTANCES AND THAT I BELIEVED
TIME HAD COME FOR MORE ACTIVE DIALOGUE BETWEEN OUR GOVERNMENTS.
I MENTIONED THAT SECRETARY HAD HOPED TO SEE FOREIGN MINISTER
HAMMADI AT UN LAST FALL AND THAT WE WERE SORRY MEETING HAD NOT
TAKEN PLACE. I ALSO SAID I WAS CERTAIN THAT SECRETARY
WOULD STILL LIKE TO MEET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ON SUITABLE
OCCASION. HADITHI SAID HE WOULD PASS THIS ALONG TO FOREIGN
MINISTER.

11. COMMENT: MEETING WAS CORDIAL AND IRAQIS NOW APPEAR WILLING TO
CONDUCT SUBSTANTIVE EXCHANGES WITH USINT AT REASONABLY SENIOR
LEVELS OF GOI. MOST INTERESTING SUBSTANTIVE POINTS THAT EMERGED
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DURING MEETING WERE: A) HADITHI'S ADMISSION THAT "SOME ARAB
STATES" KNEW IN THEIR "HEART OF HEARTS" THAT THEY WOULD HAVE

TO ACCEPT THE EXISTANCE OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL AND B) HADITHI'S STATEMENT THAT UNITED STATES WOULDNOT HAVE TO GIVE UP ITS SUPPORT OF ISRAEL TO ENJOY GOOD RELATIONS WITH IRAQ BUT ONLY SHOW MORE UNDERSTANDING OF PALESTINIAN GRIEVENCES. MEETING ALSO TENDED TO CONFIRM MY EARLIER IMPRESSION THAT GOI POLICY IS EVOLVING AWAY FROM HARD LINE "REJECTIONIST" ACTIVISM AND TOWARDS A HANDS-OFF ATTITUDE ON A POSSIBLE ARAB-ISRAELI SETTLEMENT, ALTHOUGH EXTREMEIST RHETORIC WIL NOT DOUT CONTINUE AS DAILY BREAD AND BUTTER OF BAGHDAD'S GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED PRESS. END COMMENT:

12. I RECOMMEND THAT WE FOLLOW UP ON THE GOI'S APPARENT WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE USINT IN SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS. IN PARTICULAR, I BELIEVE WE COULD PROBE FURTHER ON QUESTION OF HOW FAR GOI POLICY HAS EVOLVED AWAY FROM REJECTIONIST ACTIVISM AND EXTENT TO WHICH GOI HAS NOW PUT OTHER PRIORITIES, SUCH AS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AHEAD OF THEIR CONCERN FOR PALESTINIAN CAUSES. WE MIGHT ALSO BE ABLE TO OBTAIN SOME IDEA OF THEIR THINKING ON FUTURE SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE GULF.

13. I THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT I BE INSTRUCTED TO REQUEST AN APPOINTMENT WITH HADITHI, OR IF HADITHI IS NOT AVAILABLE, WITH WALI, THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE POLITICAL DEPT. IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, AND MAKE A FURTHER APPROACH UNDER INSTRUCTIONSON USG POLICY TOWARDS THE PALESTINIANS AND USG POSITION IN THE CURRENT UNSC DEBATE. AFTER MAKING THIS PRESENTATION I COULD PROBE FURTHER ON IRAQ'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE REJECTIONIST FRONT AND, IF TIME PERMITS, ASK FOR IRAQ'S VIEWS ON POSSIBLE FUTURE SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS IN THE GULF.
WILEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, PARTY LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: RowellE0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BAGHDA00028
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760011-0826
From: BAGHDAD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760164/aaaacenq.tel
Line Count: 254
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: RowellE0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 MAY 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <30 SEP 2004 by RowellE0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MEETING WITH FONMIN UNDERSECRETARY HADITHI
TAGS: PFOR, IZ, US, XF, (AL-HADITHI, MOHAMMED SABRI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006